

Every Hour Come to This

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Summary: Abbie thought she'd be used to this whole Crane business by now, and she mostly is, though there are still a few surprises left.

Every Hour Come to This

Abbie thought she'd be used to the whole Crane business by now, and she is, to some extent. Ancient Sumerian diety wants to wrangle? She's down for that. African war demon? She's not even worried. Freaky-ass historical mumbo-jumbo requiring time travel, mystical incantations and bringing one of Crane's long-lost fraternity brothers back from the dead? That's basically Thursday. Things like that, she can handle. They can handle, she corrects herself, because they're a team.

She's used to coming home from work, like she's doing today, to discover whatever latest madness Crane has been up to while she's been gone, and his detailed recounting of same, even if the evidence is spread all over the kitchen table, blaring from computer speakers or wandering around the back yard, with a rawhide bone in its mouth. They've been the proud parents of a pit bull mix named Vulcan -in honor of George Washington's dog, not Star Trek, but the neighbors can think what they want- for three and a half weeks now.

She's used to the presence of Crane's body next to hers at night, the way he gets up to wander the house in the space between first and second sleep. The whole getting up for an hour or two in the middle of the night thing is definitely not for her, but, for him, it fits. She'll roll over, snuggle into the covers he'd warmed for her, and listen, half-asleep, to the sounds of him rattling around, Vulcan dogging his every step. Pun intended. How he hums under his breath, a mashup of eighteenth century popular music and top forty, while he tries to be mostly quiet on his nighttime meanderings, and mostly fails. She mostly doesn't mind. Mostly. When Crane gets back into her

warm bed with his cold feet, that, she minds. He's offered to bring a warm brick, wrapped in flannel, when he returns to bed, and she's not hating the idea, but Vulcan draping his big self over the foot of their bed is pretty toasty already.

She's used to sitting next to Crane in church on Sundays, because, somehow, all of the supernatural insanity they've been through together only serves to cement what he already believed in the first place. Somebody sure had to be looking out for them, for them both to be standing after all the dust settled, and it makes him happy, so why not? It's good to be connected to something, good to be connected to somebody. The more they go on like this, the harder it is to remember what it was like before, and, she has to admit, the less she wants to even think about that 'before' part of her life.

She's used to his presence in her life, in her home -their home- used to the scent of his soap, the constant motion of his hands. They even flutter, albeit slower and less gracefully, in his sleep. She's used to saying us now, instead of me. She's used to the gold band on the fourth finger of her left hand, used to seeing the matching ring on his hand as well. Looks good on him. Feels good on her, part of her body now, more than a piece of jewelry. she didn't think it was going to be that way, maybe not ever, but, with Crane, it's natural. Right. She's almost ready to believe that all the crazy times are behind them and it's all right to let down her guard, relax her defenses. Believe that good really did win out over evil, or, at the very least, hit the snooze alarm on the apocalypse. She's learned to hedge her bets, and she's not naive enough to believe the danger is really ever over, as long as there's evil in the world. They've both seen more than their share of it, and the knowledge of that is part of what binds them together.

She's used to Crane sorting through their mail, leaving his and hers stacks on the small desk tucked into the space next to the refrigerator. She's not used to him standing there, on the front porch, a white envelope pinched between pointer and middle fingers, his entire being vibrating with anticipation. She's used to feeling his moods as well and as strongly as her own, and she knows, without having to ask, that whatever this letter -as yet unopened- contains makes him happy. "Give," she demands, and swipes at the air below the envelope. He grins at her and waves the envelope, too high for her to take it from him. Vulcan's tail thumps against the wood of the porch floor.

She's used to Crane faking her out, extending an item and then drawing it back, his eyes lit with the purest amusement she's ever seen. She regrets the day she ever showed him the Peanuts comic with Lucy and the football, and fixes him with her best I-have-a-badge-and-a-gun look. It works. He sketches a courtly bow -that is never, ever going to get old- and presents the envelope for her perusal. "The first official missive for Abigail Crane has arrived, from the office of the jury commissioner."

Abbie taps one fingernail against the clear film over her name and address. "That's Mills-Crane. They forgot the hyphen. Mills-Crane." She slides her nail under the flap at the same time he slips his arm about her shoulders, and she laughs, leans into him, and skims over the summons. "Before you ask," she lays a finger over his parted lips, his whiskers soft to her touch, "jury duty is less dangerous than the catacombs, but waiting to be called is about as boring as

being buried alive for two hundred years. No, you cannot come. I will explain the whole process, in detail, but my explanation only lasts as long as the foot rub you are going to give me once I get out of these shoes." Crane unwinds his arm from her shoulder, breathes on his hands and rubs them together. She can most definitely get used to this.

End  
file.